

## House Republican Press Release

June 15, 2005  
Press Office: 860-240-8700

### Letter to the Editor



To the editor:

Gov. M. Jodi Rell has appropriately vetoed a bill that would have state officials set food policy for local schools and would have mandated 20 minutes of daily recess. The legislation was based on a faulty assumption that educators, already overburdened with academic and other requirements, can solve the social problem of overweight children.

There is no question that childhood obesity is a concern. But schools supervise children only six hours a day for 180 days a year. The other 18 hours of the day, the other half of the year, children are under parental supervision.

Parents, not teachers, have the primary influence and responsibility for what their children eat. The parents' role should be first and foremost.

Certainly, we all agree that children drink too much soda and not enough milk. Yes, many children desperately need to put away their electronic games and go play some outdoor sports.

But should teachers, already working to teach a full curriculum of academic subjects, be burdened with resolving yet another social issue? Already, teachers and staff work hard to meet the academic and testing requirements of the state and federal government. They need not have to watch over Johnny's eating habits.

Also, the terms of the vetoed legislation were overly convoluted. It would have directed that schools offer only water, milk, 100% fruit or vegetable juice, and beverages with only water and fruit juice. It would have allowed high schools to sell sugar free soft drinks or Gatorade type drinks ½ hour after lunch ends, provided they make up only 20% of the beverages they offer.

Middle and high schools would have been permitted to sell all other beverages, if the sale is in connection with a school-sponsored event after the regular school day or weekend and they are sold at the location of the event and not from a vending machine or school store.